

What Is Claimed Is:

1. A method for triggering an electromechanical coupling unit (4) having at least two coupling windings (71, 72) for the needs-based provision of a coupling between a first mechanical device (10) and a second mechanical device (20), in which each of the coupling windings (71, 72) may be supplied with electrical energy by at least one connected electrical control unit (11, 12, 21, 22), in which
 - the coupling unit (4) is closed and provides a coupling between the two mechanical devices (10, 20) if none of the coupling windings (71, 72) are supplied with electrical energy, and
 - the coupling unit (4) is open and provides no coupling between the two mechanical devices (10, 20) if at least one coupling winding (71, 72) is supplied with electrical energy.
2. The method as recited in Claim 1, in which the electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22) are respectively assigned to one of the two mechanical devices (10, 20) for triggering and respectively supply the connected coupling winding (71, 72) with electrical energy as a function of their own system states using at least one trigger element (6a, 6b, 6c).
3. The method as recited in Claim 2, in which the connected electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22) are each assigned its own power supply.
4. The method as recited in one of Claims 1 through 3, in which the electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22) connected to the coupling windings (71, 72) are all assigned to one of the two mechanical devices (10, 20).

5. The method as recited in one of Claims 1 through 4, in which the connected electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22) are in part assigned to the first mechanical device (10) and are in part assigned to the second mechanical device (20).
6. The method as recited in one of Claims 1 through 5, in which the electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22) detect the functioning of the coupling with the aid of sensors.
7. The method as recited in one of the preceding claims, in which for implementing a functional test the coupling windings (71, 72) are individually not supplied with electrical energy for a brief period and the coupling unit (4) remains open during the functional test.
8. A steering system for providing a coupling between a first mechanical device (10) and a second mechanical device having:
 - a coupling unit (4), which has at least two coupling windings (71, 72), and
 - a number of electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22), each coupling winding (71, 72) being connected to at least one of the electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22) for supplying electrical energy, the coupling unit (4) being configured in such a way that
 - the coupling unit (4) is closed and provides a coupling between the two mechanical devices (10, 20) if none of the coupling windings (71, 72) are supplied with electrical energy, and

- the coupling unit (4) is open and provides no coupling between the two mechanical devices (10, 20) if at least one coupling winding (71, 72) is supplied with electrical energy.

9. The steering system as recited in Claim 8, in which the first mechanical device (10) is a steering handle (10) and the second mechanical device (20) is a steered vehicle wheel (20).
10. The steering system as recited in Claim 8 or 9, in which sensors (51, 52) are provided for detecting the functioning of the coupling unit (4).
11. The steering system as recited in one of Claims 8 through 10, in which in the electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22) respectively at least one trigger element (6a, 6b, 6c) is provided for supplying the connected coupling winding (71, 72) with electrical energy.
12. The steering system as recited in one of Claims 8 through 11, in which data lines are provided for exchanging information between the electrical control units (11, 12, 21, 22).